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SUBJECT: Etumba fleshes out government proposal for implementing Goma peace process

Ref: Kinshasa 162

1. (SBU) Summary: The Congolese government intends to issue a follow-up decree to clarify problematic elements of the "Amani" decree intended to implement the Goma peace process. The forthcoming decree would vest decision-making power in the provincial military and humanitarian sub-commissions rather than the Kinshasa-based Technical Commissions, and would set aside the vice-presidencies of each for the international signatories to the Acte of Engagement. The government also offered CNDP a place on the Steering Committee and positions on the secretariats assigned to support the various commissions and sub-commissions. Lack of consultations between CNDP's military and political wings raised questions about its position on current discussions. End summary.

2. (SBU) International facilitators met with Naval Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral Didier Etumba at their request February 14 at MONUC's Goma headquarters to better understand the mechanisms being proposed by the government to implement the Kivus Conference Acte d'Engagement. Etumba was accompanied by 8th Military Region Deputy Commander Colonel Delphin Kahimbi, with SRSG Chief of Staff John Almstrom of MONUC, Ben Shepard of the UK, Colonel Pechoux of EUSEC and Nick Jenks and Willet Weeks of the U.S. participating as facilitators.

3. (SBU) Etumba confirmed that the Technical Commission, officially known as the Mixed Technical Commission for Peace and Security, will be based in Kinshasa. However, it will include only one person appointed by the GDRC, so will not really, on its own, be a committee as such. It will have a vice president drawn from the international signatories to the Acte. Consultants can be attached to it.

4. (SBU) The Commission's sub-commissions, namely the Mixed Military Sub-commission and the Mixed Humanitarian Sub-commission, are where the decision-making will reside. The former will be based in Goma and the latter in Bukavu. These -- not the Technical Commission -- are the bodies that will be "empowered with decision-making authority" in a decree to be issued soon.

5. (SBU) Etumba said that international facilitators would have the vice presidencies of not only the Technical Commission, but of all its subsidiaries as well. This will mean one post in Kinshasa, two in Goma and two in Bukavu.

6. (SBU) Almstrom later reported to other international facilitators that Etumba had offered CNDP the position of "permanently invited guest" at the Steering Committee in Kinshasa during a meeting that morning involving Almstrom, Etumba, Kahimbi and a CNDP military delegation. Etumba had also offered CNDP positions on the secretariats that will be attached to the Technical Commissions and

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its sub-commissions. (Note: Almstrom had not informed the rest of the international facilitators of this meeting in advance, nor invited them to participate. End note.)

¶17. (SBU) As the meeting with Etumba was finishing, the CNDP delegation, consisting of Major Seraphin Mirindi, another major and a captain, inexplicably joined it, much to participants' confusion. They allowed that they had not had a chance to talk to their political counterparts who had been at the meeting the day before (reftel), but nonetheless launched into additional concerns which the political delegation had not raised.

¶18. (SBU) The first was about coordination at the provincial level, and the second about size or representation on the various commissions and sub-commissions. They proposed that the government have 50 per cent and they have 50 per cent and that other armed groups such as Mai-Mai and PARECO be included in the government's 50 per cent. Both MONUC and government told CNDP to stop playing games and cooperate with what had been agreed to by all sides, and move the process forward.

¶19. (SBU) Comment: International facilitators had a much clearer idea of the government's vision following Etumba's presentation. However, it was very clear that the government does not want nor intend to revise or cancel the first decree. It intends to use the "empowering" language in the following decree to be able to say to the CNDP: "we heard your concerns, and have officialized them, the way you want, in this one," while not going down the embarrassing road of canceling or amending the first. End comment.

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